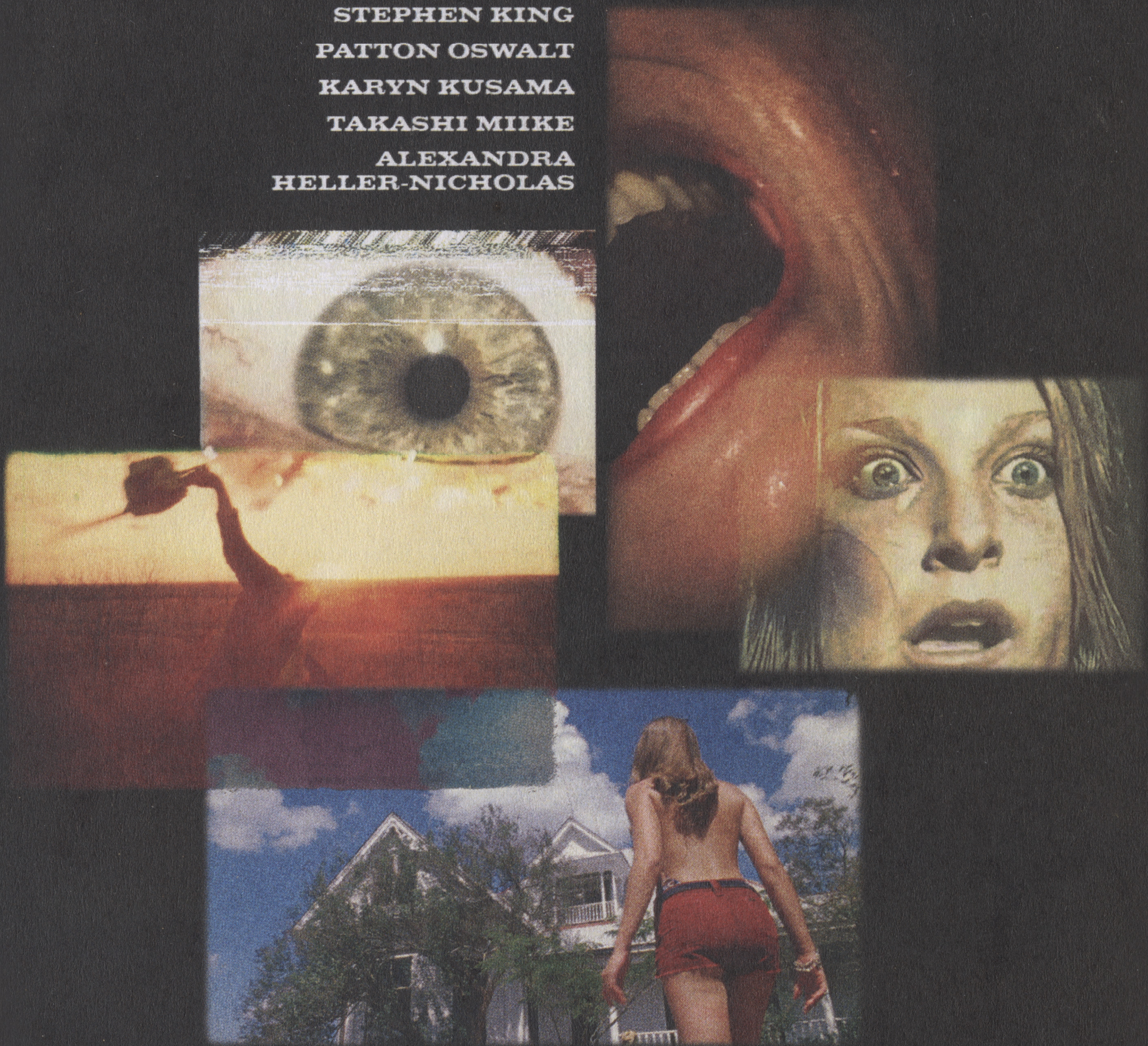


FEATURING

STEPHEN KING
PATTON OSWALT
KARYN KUSAMA
TAKASHI MIIKE
ALEXANDRA
HELLER-NICHOLAS



MOSTRA INTERNAZIONALE
D'ARTE CINEMATOGRAFICA
LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA 2024
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CHAIN REACTIONS

TEXAS. UNCHAINED.

by Alexandre O. Philippe (Writer, Director | *Chain Reactions*)

One fine day in March 2023, while in transit through the Athens International Airport on my way to the Thessaloniki Documentary Film Festival, I received a call from my good friend and frequent co-producing partner, Annick Mahnert—Director of Programming at Fantastic Fest and Executive Director of the Frontières Market. As we were getting ready to board the plane, she told me that “some people” wanted to talk to me about “a project,” and asked if she could put me in touch with them. It all sounded very mysterious and secretive, but of course, I’ll take any recommendation from Annick.

The following day, I found myself on a Zoom call with the good people at MPI / Dark Sky Films, who handle *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* on behalf of the rights holders. Greg Newman (who produced the magnificent box set you’re holding in your hands, and has been a champion of this project from Day One) was on the call. He told me they were getting ready to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Tobe Hooper and Kim Henkel’s classic, and wanted to know if I’d be interested in making a film to commemorate that milestone. I learned during that call that *78/52, Memory: The Origins of Alien*, and *Leap of Faith: William Friedkin on The Exorcist* had made an impression on Kim Henkel and his son Ian. *Would I be INTERESTED??* Frankly, there could be no greater compliment—and considering my very strong feelings for (and complicated history with) *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*, I’m pretty sure I said YES before Greg could even finish his sentence. I do remember telling him: “But if I’m going to make a film about Texas, I’d want to explore it through the lens of beauty and poetry.”

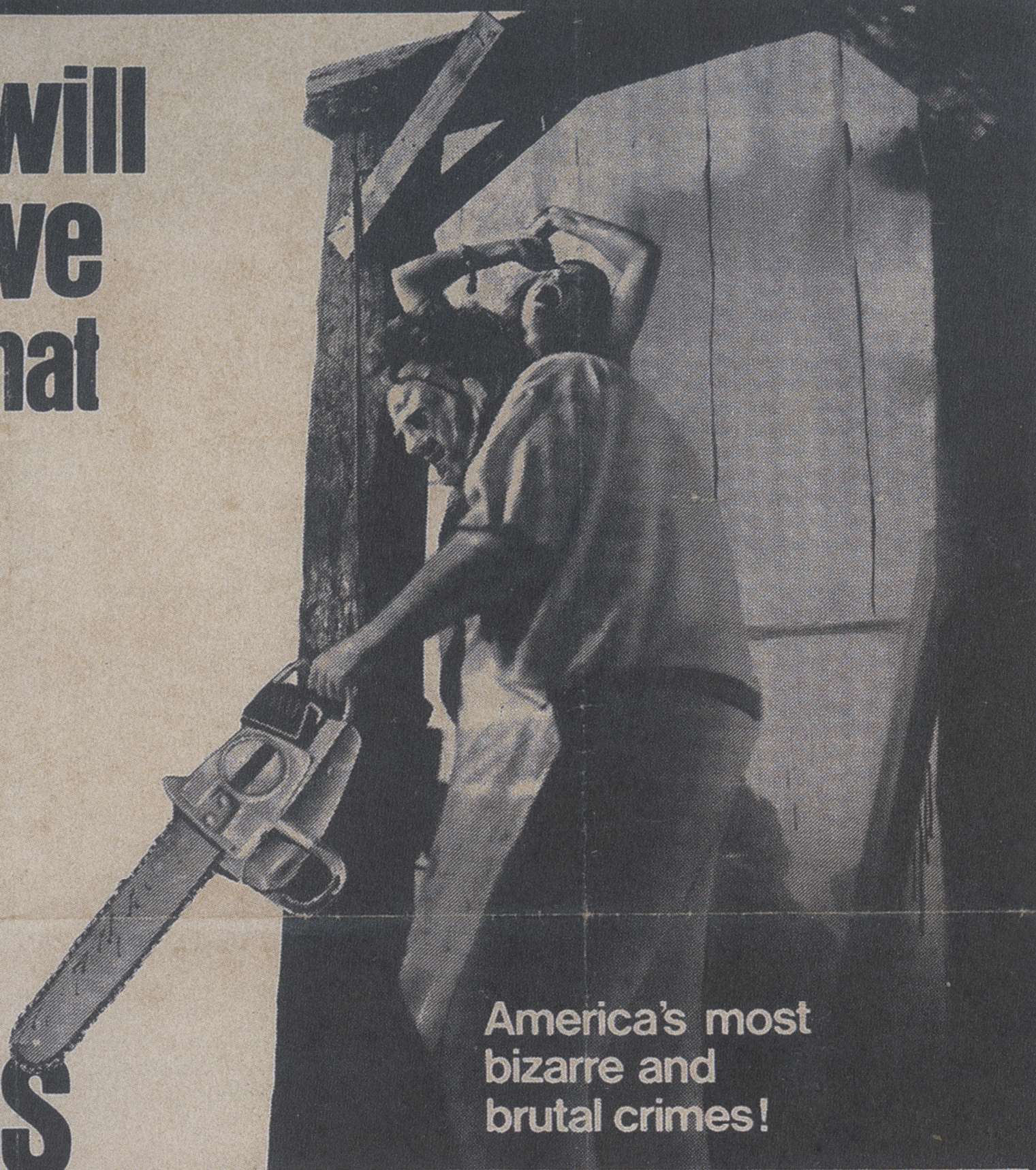
You see, I grew up watching horror films—*Eyes Without a Face*, *Scanners*, *Night of the Living Dead*... I watched them all before I even became a teenager. But *Texas* seemed like a step too far. The film’s images felt too real and unnerving, as Patton Oswalt expresses in *Chain Reactions*, and I just couldn’t bring myself to watch it then. So I kept postponing. Kicking the can down the road, year after year. Knowing that one day—one fateful day—I’d eventually have an encounter with Leatherface and his relatives. But not now. Not this year. Not yet.

That day eventually came when I turned 24. This is what I remember: I was in New Haven, Connecticut. It was a warm, sunny day in late spring. The birds were singing. I had run out of excuses not to watch *Texas*, and I finally rented the damn VHS tape from the local video store. I took a deep breath and pressed PLAY. It was going to be all right. The TV screen was quite small, after all, and the sun was shining through a set of large windows. What could possibly go wrong...?

A lot, as it turns out.



**Who will
survive
and what
will be
left of
them?**



**America's most
bizarre and
brutal crimes!**

“THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE”

What happened is true. Now the motion picture that's just as real.



**RIPS ITS WAY ACROSS THE TEXAS TERRITORY
IN 230 THEATRES, OCTOBER 11th...**

FROM BRYANSTON PICTURES

who brought you Andy Warhol's "FRANKENSTEIN" and Bruce Lee's "RETURN OF THE DRAGON". The exciting new name in distribution

Cut yourself a piece of the action now!



It was the dinner scene that got me. Sally screaming at the top of her lungs, without respite. Those unnerving close-ups... extreme close-ups... extreme EXTREME close-ups of her naked eyeball, desperately searching for a way out. An eyeball gasping for air, if there's such a thing. I had never experienced such despair—such pure, uncompromising horror. I thought I was going mad. I just couldn't take it anymore. And I had to press STOP.

After taking a few deep breaths, I decided to walk around the block a couple of times, soak in the sunshine, listen to the birds, and remind myself that it's a beautiful world we live in, after all. (What I didn't realize then, of course, was how much beauty Tobe Hooper had packed into every frame of *Texas*; but more on this later.) After a good, long walk, I went back inside to face that haunted television set again—and finish the film. To this day, *Texas* is the only film I've ever had to pause because I couldn't handle it.

My next encounter with the film was at the Ramaskrik Film Festival in Norway. It was the 40th anniversary restored re-release. This time, it was on the big screen. And after so many years, I frankly wasn't sure I'd be capable of facing that film again. Especially not on such a large canvas. Especially not in the dark.

And yet, something really strange happened that day. From that epic long take in the graveyard, it was the film's beauty that took my breath away. The grain. The framing. The colors. Leatherface's extraordinary bone sculptures—the work of a demented Jean Tinguely. The visual poetry. And for 82 minutes, I was swept away. I didn't walk out. I couldn't peel my eyes away from the screen. Sally's eyeball shots were still unnerving, but all I could think about was: "Carl Theodor Dreyer would be blown away by this!" I imagined Joan of Arc and Sally Hardesty looking at each other across the ages. I was experiencing Cinema with a capital C. And every single time I've watched *Texas* since then, I find something new. And I simply can't look away.

Fast forward to that fateful day in March 2023. During our Zoom call, Greg said Kim and Ian would like to meet in Austin. As serendipity would have it, we were just weeks away from premiering *You Can Call Me Bill* at SXSW. Conveniently, three weeks later, Kerry Roy (producer) and I met with Greg, Kim, and Ian the day after our premiere for a Mexican brunch to discuss the project.

I'd had a few weeks to think about the concept, the structure, and possible participants. We talked about beauty and poetry—and Patton Oswalt. The film's editor, David Lawrence, had told me about Patton's brilliant *New Yorker* article on *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* and the poetic work of trailer recutters, and Patton immediately became my top choice to open the film.



Chain Reactions, ultimately, is about how a film gets under your skin. It's about impact, resonance, influence—and trauma. But it's also about the sensory experience of watching a film. It's about circumstances, serendipity, texture, and format. Each of our five participants was exposed to *Texas* through a different medium. Watching the restored 4K UHD, a grungy 35mm grindhouse print, or the K-Tel Australian VHS are distinct experiences. So distinct, in fact, that it hardly feels like you're watching the same film.

This quickly became an obsession, and I told Ian and Greg: "How great would it be to release *Chain Reactions* with multiple rare and unique versions of *Texas* in a box set—to give fans the opportunity to re-experience their favorite film in ways that will broaden their appreciation of it?"

Honestly, guys, how cool are MPI / Dark Sky and Exurbia for saying YES to this crazy project?! And how wonderful are the collectors and archivists who gave us access to those rare prints and wrote the essays printed in this booklet? Some say we might have gone slightly overboard here, but if you're a fan of *Texas*, you now have eight new and distinct ways to revisit the film! And trust me—some of those are WILD!

My personal favorite..? Undoubtedly the dubbed, smuggled '80s Czech version, based on a rip of the German VHS tape. I found that one while attending IFF Art Film in Košice, Slovakia, thanks to Martin Paluch and Igor Kovacs, and courtesy of Petr "I Irošík" Svoboda—Slovakia's #1 collector of dubbed VHS tapes.

But of course, they're all special. And for the next eight years, you should play a different one every August 18th, and compare it with the restored version... until we come up with another box set, with even rarer and crazier versions of the only film I ever had to pause the first time around—and one of a handful of films I now can't stop watching over and over again, from beginning to end, with my eyeballs wide open, searching for new details, new meanings, and new ways of thinking about the American nightmare...



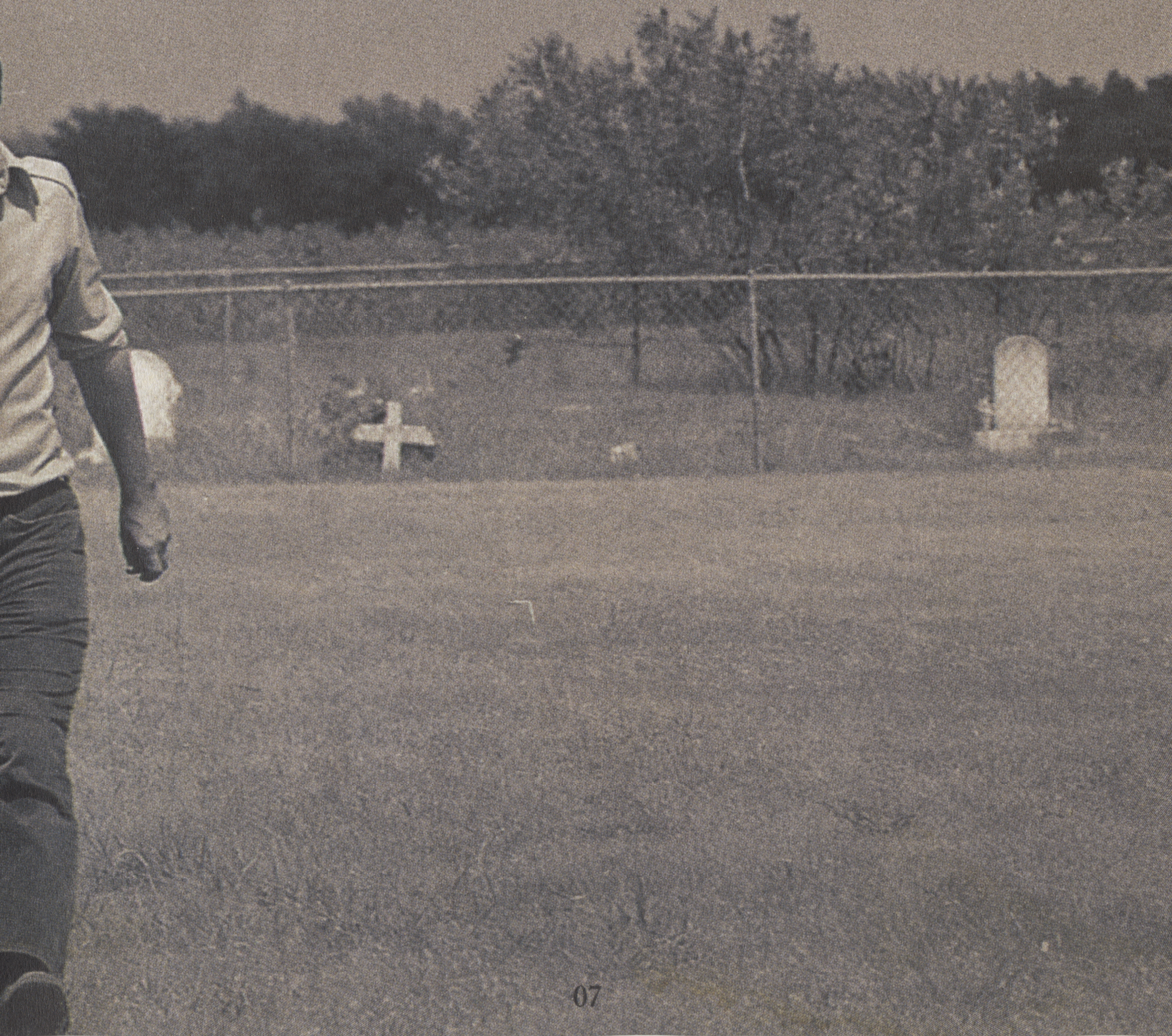
CHAIN REACTIONS

by KIM NEWMAN

As Alexandre O. Philippe's *Chain Reactions* demonstrates, Tobe Hooper's *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* has struck sparks across cultures ... generations ... boundaries of taste ... and sensibilities.

Through the *Rashomon*-like accounts of five scholars, fans and professionals, *Chain Reactions* doesn't set out to offer any one definitive reading of the film but to encourage a multiplicity of approaches, positioning *TCSM* in the centre of a web of influences and associations. These range from producer David O. Selznick's monolith of Golden Age Hollywood *Gone With the Wind* (1939), in which Rhett Butler (Clark Gable) sweeps Scarlett O'Hara (Vivien Leigh) off her feet in a romantic clinch echoed by Leatherface's grip on a squirming victim, to underground filmmaker Stan Brakhage's *The Act of Seeing With One's Own Eyes* (1971), a devastatingly clinical documenatry about autopsy in which human bodies are disassembled in the camera's unflinching eye. We learn what relationships American comedian Patton Oswalt, Australian critic Alexander Heller-Nicholas, American novelist Stephen King and Japanese and American directors Takashi Miike and Karyn Kusama have with Hooper's film – and how its fly-blown, sunstruck, confrontational aesthetic has informed their own work ... but also how *TCSM* has stuck in their minds.

This is how I came to know *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*.



I live in the United Kingdom. In the mid-1970s, I was a teenage horror fan but the range of the genre was defined for me by what was broadcast on British television (mostly) and came round to cinemas in my region (Somerset, in the West Country). Horror was shivery but also cosy ... glow-in-the-dark Aurora model kits of Lugosi's Dracula and Karloff's Frankenstein Monster ... the chill of the BBC's annual *Ghost Story for Christmas* treats ... and Cushing and Lee in Hammer films or Amicus anthologies. Thanks to a censorship kerfuffle in the 1950s, there was still a ban on horror comics. You could see the film of *Tales From the Crypt* but importing the EC comics it was based on was technically illegal.

In 1974 or thereabouts, a family friend – John Eden, a potter – taught at an American university for a few semesters. From what we saw on the news, that was as perilous a place as Belfast during the Troubles. John told us that, contrary to the British media, his small campus was not the site of constant clashes between student radicals and the National Guard ... but that America was a strange country which didn't recognise its own peculiarities. A nation of coffee-drinkers where you couldn't get a decent cup of coffee anywhere ... where broadcast television consisted 50/50 of programmes and hard-sell adverts the like of which would be laughed offscreen by the sophisticates who made UK telly ads (you know, Ridley Scott and Alan Parker) ... and where the President, no less, had to go on live television not from the Oval Office but Disney World to tell the viewing public 'I am not a crook' and no one believed him.

As for the cinema, John cited a marquee he had walked past blaring the titles of a double bill he simply could not believe really existed ... *The Incredible 2-Headed Transplant* ... and ... *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*.

Seriously, what was that all about?

This was the first time I'd heard of Tobe Hooper's *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*. The first time I'd heard of Anthony M. Lanza's *The Incredible 2-Headed Transplant* too, come to that – though Lanza's film would loom less large in my personal journey into 1970s horror cinema. It is fun, though.

In *Chain Reactions*, Patton Oswalt makes a good case for hailing *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre** as the greatest title of all time. I think it's up there, in a declarative corner of the horror section with *I Was a Teenage Werewolf*, *The Rats Are Coming!*, *The Werewolves Are Here!* and *I Dismember Mama*. It's all-encompassing blunt where other key 1970s horror titles – *The Omen*, *Shivers*, *Squirm*, *Halloween* – are evocative. It makes no bones about its subject matter. Comparing shock for shock, Wes Craven's *The Last House on the Left* might just be a nastier, more upsetting (but not better) movie than *TCSM* ... but its title is deliberately mild, and you needed a whole ad campaign ('keep telling yourself ... it's only a movie ... only a movie') to tell audiences what they were in for.

Look at it again.

The Texas Chain Saw Massacre.
... and imagine that film.





Especially, if like me in 1974 you've not seen *Night of the Living Dead* ... and the works of Herschell Gordon Lewis (*Blood Feast*, *Two Thousand Maniacs!*) are just rumours from listings on film magazines.

A schoolfriend a few years earlier noticed that a film scheduled for late-night television was called *Corridors of Blood* and fantasises something a lot like the tidal wave of gore which Stanley Kubrick would put into *The Shining* in 1980. *Corridors of Blood* did not live up to that – and, frankly, didn't even try.

Corridors of Blood did not fill corridors with blood. But *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* must deliver a massacre, carried out with a chain saw, in Texas.

Even the taglines are brilliant.

'Who will survive and what will be left of them?'

'What happened is true. Now the motion picture that's just as real.'

Unlike John Eden, I believed there was a film with this title. It wasn't just a put-on, like the made-up double bill (*The Convent Murders* and *Rapist Cult*) the killer watches before terrorising Mia Farrow in *Blind Terror* or 'The Cockroach That Ate Cincinnati' in the Rose and the Arrangement novelty song**. Before long, I could read reviews of Hooper's film in US (*Cinefantastique*) and UK (*House of Hammer*) horror film magazines – both dismissive. Oh well, I didn't expect *I Dismember Mama* would live up to its title either (it doesn't). But a mention in print – with stills, poster images – meant the film was real.

For a while, I had wondered whether John had made it up. Or got the title wrong – he'd slightly mangled *The Incredible 2-Headed Transplant*, misremembering it as *The Head Transplant That Went Wrong* (actually, also a good title).

In the United Kingdom, *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* had a thorny distribution.

The British Board of Film Censors (now the British Board of Film Classification) spent much of the 1970s enmeshed in battles over their decisions to grant certificates to the likes of *Straw Dogs*, *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Exorcist* – which attracted a great deal of criticism from the press and campaigners who felt these films shouldn't be seen on British screens. These were major studio movies from auteur directors, so refusing certificates would have excited more controversy than granting them. Meanwhile, the BBFC only let *Night of the Living Dead* through with crippling cuts (I first saw it *without* the trowel murder) and refused to certify *Blood Feast* or *The Last House on the Left*, films then so obscure no one made a fuss about banning them.

In all likelihood, *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* would have joined that list – but it was selected for the London Film Festival in 1975, and the public screening led to a lot of press coverage (pro- and anti-) and put the BBFC's director, James Ferman, on the spot. He gave a version of the 'would you let your servants read it?' line from the *Lady Chatterley's Lover* obscenity trial by arguing that it was all very well for metropolitan middle-class cineastes to see Hooper's film in the refined atmosphere of a prestigious film festival ... but would you want to show it to a Birmingham factory worker on a Saturday night in the local Palace or Essoldo?

In the UK at the time, local councils had the power to grant certificates for screenings in their areas – even if the BBFC had refused certification. The Greater London Authority gave *TCSM* an X certificate (those above the age of eighteen admitted), albeit with a sixteen second cut (the impaled victim clutching at the hook from which she's dangling). And that's the film I saw – at the Brighton Film Theatre, fifty miles South of Greater London but under their legal umbrella – on October 26, 1977. Looking at my lists, that was the month – my first at Sussex University, and an orgy of cinemania - I saw (for the first time!) *Annie Hall*, *The Searchers*, *Demon Seed*, *Punishment Park*, *La maschera del Demonio*, *Death Line*, *Once Upon a Time in the West* and *Lancelot du Lac*. I doubt I could process more than one of these a month now, but there they all were. And *TCSM* was the one which had the most immediate and lasting impact.

The screening was introduced by Alexander Walker, the longstanding critic of the London Evening Standard and an outspoken campaigner against film censorship – who'd later change his mind and make foolish statements about *Crash* and Lars von Trier. It was a young, mostly student audience – I'd gone with a whole bunch from my hall of residence – aligned with Ferman's view of the LFF type. As for the film ...

We couldn't believe it.

Then we *did* believe it.

It's the same for every generation – even if there are now folk who look at Hooper's film as a museum piece and find it tame. At some point, after the lower slopes of classic horror, you hit a *TCSM* moment. Before we were old enough to see horror movies by staying up late to watch on television or dressing as grown-ups to get into X certificate films, we had an idea of what they would be like ... that kid envisioning a tide of blood filling a corridor ... me trying to get my head around what a chainsaw massacre (in Texas) would look (and sound) like. Then, when we get to see, say, *Dr Phibes Rises Again* or *Blacula*, we relax a bit. We can take this – it's not so scary – it is fun, and even a bit wince-inducing or shivery. Then you hit a *TCSM* ...

(or a [insert the title from your *TCSM* moment])







... and you see a film which really is as terrifying, as indelible, as nightmarish, as *real* as you once thought horror films would be. Takashi Miike, who'd go on to make *Audition*, only saw *TCSM* because a screening of Charlie Chaplin's *City Lights* was sold out. That's one way of coming to the picture. Alexandra Heller-Nicholas had to watch a succession of beat-up videotapes which almost represent an alternate incarnation of the film – a blurry, degraded, seen-through-fingers version of Hooper's vision.

Christ, two weeks after that *TCSM* screening I saw *Suspiria* for the first time ... and two weeks after that went to that year's London Film Festival for George Romero's *Martin* and Hooper's follow-up *Death Trap* (aka *Eaten Alive*) ... in the same month, I saw *Dr Mabuse*, *Freaks*, *Attica*, *Comanche Station*, *Hiroshima Mon Amour* and *L'avventura*. It was great getting into cinema in late 1977.

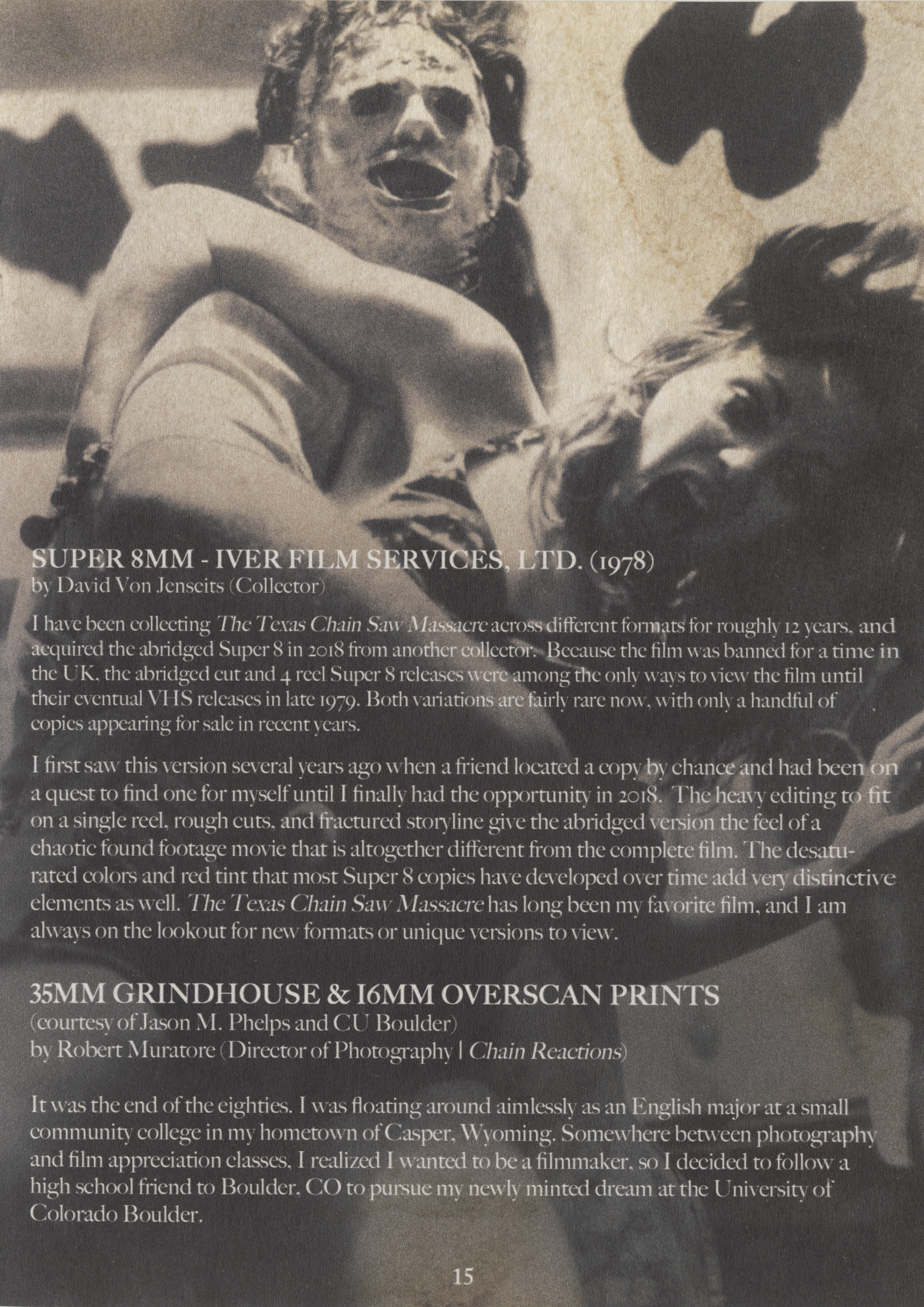
Many of the films I saw that Winter have stayed with me.

None as much as *TCSM*. I saw it again in that GLA version in 1978, on a double bill with *Helter Skelter* – in the UK, the word 'Texas' in the title was a significant qualifier, and *Helter Skelter* compounded the idea we had of what America was like, which as was once said was like watching all Verdi's operas and imagining Italy was actually like that. On 16mm, beyond the reach of the BBFC or any other authority, *TCSM* was available with those sixteen seconds of hook-dangling intact, and I personally screened it at the University Film Society. Then, a few years later, it was around on Betamax cassette – though not, oddly, on the 1980s list of video nasties, as if Hooper's artistry or Spielberg-conferred industry legitimacy lifted it out of the Driller Killer or Cannibal Holocaust category.

One of my first published pieces of film criticism was a review of *TCSM* and *Death Trap* – much reworked, it became a chapter in my several-times-revised-and-reissued book about horror films from 1968 on, *Nightmare Movies*. I have seen (and owned) the film on a multiplicity of homevideo formats. Owing to technical difficulties which aborted a preview of Hooper's late film *Djinn*, I spent a long, lovely afternoon in a Lebanese restaurant with Tobe Hooper – a shy, sweet genius who still showed flashes of the madman he must once have been in Texas. I've come to love and appreciate the pre-*TCSM* Hooper of *Eggshells*, a necessary precursor to his masterpiece and a wistful contrast in moods.

The contributors to *Chain Reactions* come at *TCSM* from different viewpoints. I recognise the diversity of their experiences with the film, but also a deep, underlying similarity. It got to all of us. It even got to *Stephen King* ...

The 1970s were not short in exercises in dread and ominousness – passages in John Hancock's *Let's Scare Jessica to Death*, moments in UK TV ghost stories now tagged 'folk horror' – but were also a decade for jump scares – the last seconds of *Carrie*, every fifteen minutes in *Halloween*. *TCSM* is a whole film like that – dread and terror, conjured by movie artistry and happenstance, baked into prints, unspooling in the velvet dark of cinemas and darker darks inside our heads forever after.



SUPER 8MM - IVER FILM SERVICES, LTD. (1978)

by David Von Jenseits (Collector)

I have been collecting *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* across different formats for roughly 12 years, and acquired the abridged Super 8 in 2018 from another collector. Because the film was banned for a time in the UK, the abridged cut and 4 reel Super 8 releases were among the only ways to view the film until their eventual VHS releases in late 1979. Both variations are fairly rare now, with only a handful of copies appearing for sale in recent years.

I first saw this version several years ago when a friend located a copy by chance and had been on a quest to find one for myself until I finally had the opportunity in 2018. The heavy editing to fit on a single reel, rough cuts, and fractured storyline give the abridged version the feel of a chaotic found footage movie that is altogether different from the complete film. The desaturated colors and red tint that most Super 8 copies have developed over time add very distinctive elements as well. *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* has long been my favorite film, and I am always on the lookout for new formats or unique versions to view.

35MM GRINDHOUSE & I6MM OVERSCAN PRINTS

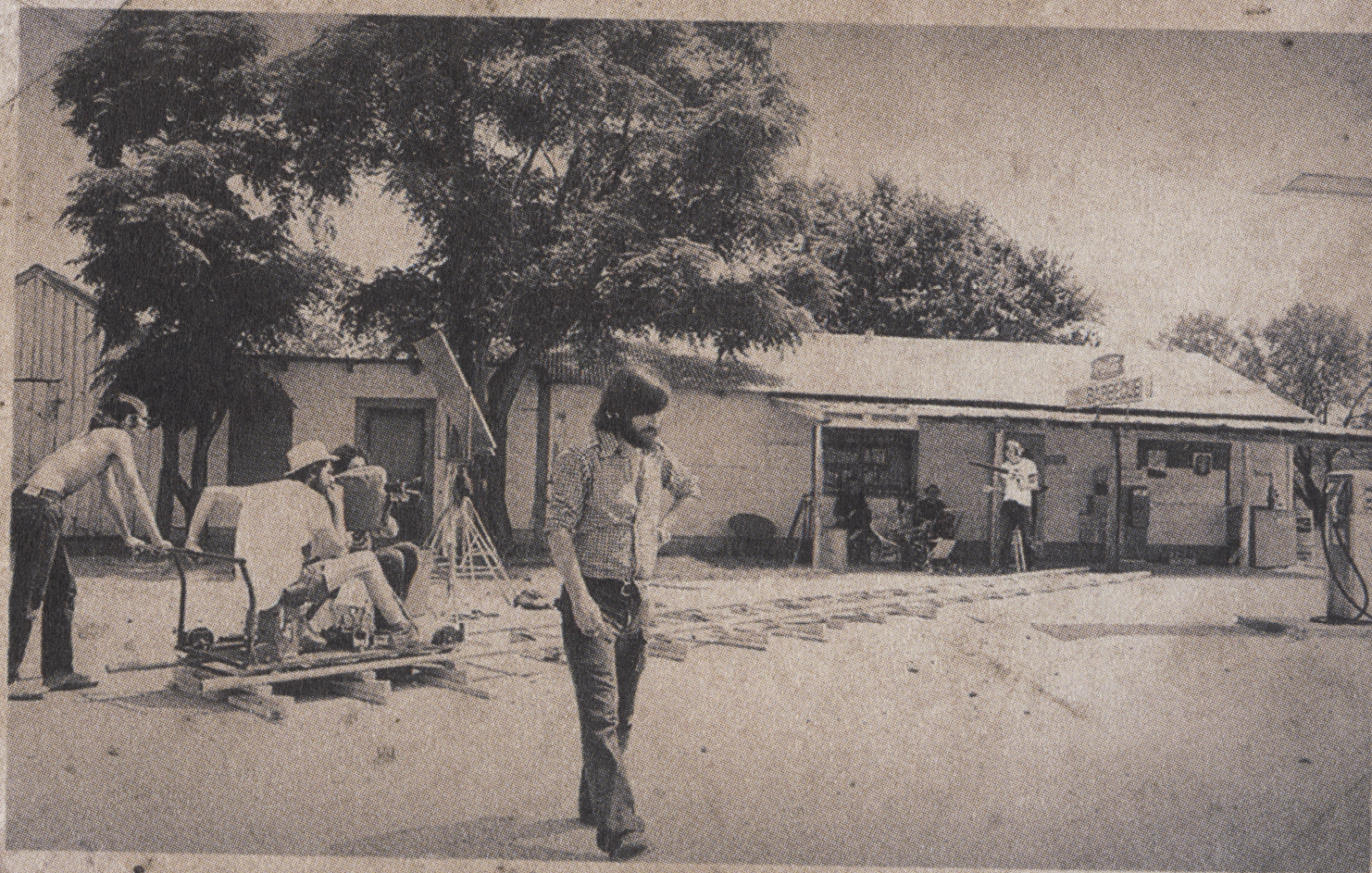
(courtesy of Jason M. Phelps and CU Boulder)

by Robert Muratore (Director of Photography | *Chain Reactions*)

It was the end of the eighties. I was floating around aimlessly as an English major at a small community college in my hometown of Casper, Wyoming. Somewhere between photography and film appreciation classes, I realized I wanted to be a filmmaker, so I decided to follow a high school friend to Boulder, CO to pursue my newly minted dream at the University of Colorado Boulder.

The sluggish, hulking university machine had just passed approval of the BA and BFA degrees in Film Studies after the program had been in existence for almost two decades. I quite preferred the intimate, scrappy atmosphere of an underfunded department holed up in a dilapidated science building that had been marked for demolition as long as the staff there could remember. The star professor at the time was experimental filmmaker Stan Brakhage, and the department leaned as much towards avant-garde cinema as it did Hollywood. Back in those days, we shot on Super 8 and 16mm film, edited on film, and screened our student projects on film, complete with double system mag tracks for audio (also splicing together bits and pieces of physical media to form sound tracks). It was grueling, expensive, anxiety-producing work, but ultimately rewarding. And even fun at times. Although we were given more education than most on experimental cinema, we were schooled in the history of all genres and time periods, including a class solely dedicated to the horror genre, which of course I signed up for as soon as I was able. We watched films like *Peeping Tom*, *Don't Look Now*, *The Last House on the Left*, and of course, *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*.

All were projected on 16mm, and that was where I first saw *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* and the actual film print that was ultimately scanned 35 years later for *Chain Reactions*. There was much serendipity, starting with the fact that the ultra-low budget *Chain Saw* was originally shot on standard 16mm in the early seventies on an Eclair NPR, meaning that the original aspect ratio was 4:3, similar to the squarish TV set screens of that era. Theatrical presentation at that time had two common aspect ratios: 1.85:1 American Widescreen and 2.35:1 Cinemascope, and so the young but skilled cinematographer of *Chain Saw*, Daniel Pearl, framed for 1.85:1 in anticipation of theatrical screenings. This means that the original 16mm negative was blown up to 35mm for theaters and the 4:3 frame was cropped at the top and bottom in the projector gate to present in the wider 1.85:1. I can't say if I remember watching the film cropped in the projector during the horror class, but the print itself held all the information at the top and bottom of the frame that was shot during production and rarely seen by the movie going public. The second moment of serendipity came to me as I thought back on my time as a student and wondered if it was possible that print might still exist at CU Boulder. After some inquiries, and with the generous assistance of Don Yannacito (my first film production teacher!) and IFS Programming Director Jason M. Phelps, we were able to track down not only the 16mm print I saw as an impressionable young film student, but also a 35mm print in what can only be described as 'grindhouse condition' (more on that later).





For the 16mm print, we enlisted the expertise of Analog Film Technician Beau Walters to overscan the print at 5K on a Lasergraphics Scanstation at CU Boulder, giving us a partial view of the sprocket holes, or perfs, on the left side of frame and the optical soundtrack on the far right. Most release prints at that time had an optical soundtrack printed onto the film itself for projectors to read (with light) and interpret the audio tracks. The print itself had the typical magenta shift for a film of that age, along with scratches, dirt, and cue marks, but overall was in fairly good shape. We color-corrected a few excerpts and zoomed in on the image at times depending on the narrative, but for the most part we presented the print as-is.

The second print we found was a 35mm print that looked like it had been through the ringer. Later on, I found out that it had been purchased decades ago through *The Big Reel* magazine by Pablo Kjolseth, the previous Programming Director of the long-running International Film Series in Boulder, Colorado. The print had deep scratches, and magenta blotches at varying amounts almost all the way through the film. It was mostly monochromatic, either a deep magenta or, for the last reel, an incredible sunset yellow that I had never witnessed on an aged print. There were many old splices and missing frames, and it looked like it had been projected thousands of times, so most likely it was an original 1974 release print. Mr. Phelps graciously set up an IFS screening and gave away seats in the theater so we could re-film the print off the auditorium screen and shoot b-roll of the projection booth and occupied house. It was a packed screening, one which we weren't sure we would get through, considering the condition of the print. I set up one camera to solely film the screen, the 1/24 shutter speed of our camera creating some ghosting effects and adding another layer of ephemeral grindhouse aesthetic to the already grungy celluloid. With my B camera, I ran around shooting inserts of the projector and auditorium, often shooting with a tilt/shift adapter to throw off the plane of focus and add a layer of surrealism. The young audience, most of whom had never watched *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*, ate it up - cringing at times, laughing at times, but whatever the case definitely having a bona fide horror film experience. An amazing feat, considering the crowd was primarily made up of desensitized college students who have seen far worse gore and violence in today's ultra-graphic horror films. What a great testament to the lasting impact and relevance of *Chain Saw*. And finally, the film only broke once, stuck in the gate, melting 35mm frames from the heat of the projector lamp, an event only a few of us film-watching veterans have witnessed in our time before the coming of digital projection. It happened right after the credits started to roll...

16MM 'BBQ' EDITION PRINT

by Ciro Nieli (Collector)

I am thrilled to include a scan of my personal print in this release. Almost a decade ago, it was one of my first purchases as a 16mm collector. It came from a guy who found it in a Philadelphia attic. It is faded, but Kodak stock, which does a good job of keeping the blues and greens. I love the look! My girlfriend refers to it as "the BBQ edition." It was filthy when I got it. There were even a few bugs trapped flat like fossils, sandwiched within the wind. I cleaned it, by hand, a few feet at a time. The only issue is some low sound during about 30 seconds of dial with the hitchhiker in the van. It still has the Bryanston titles, which are pretty rare! This print isn't perfect, but I love it just the way it is, and I am proud to have it included in your release, frozen in time.

WIZARD VIDEO VHS

by Matt Landsman

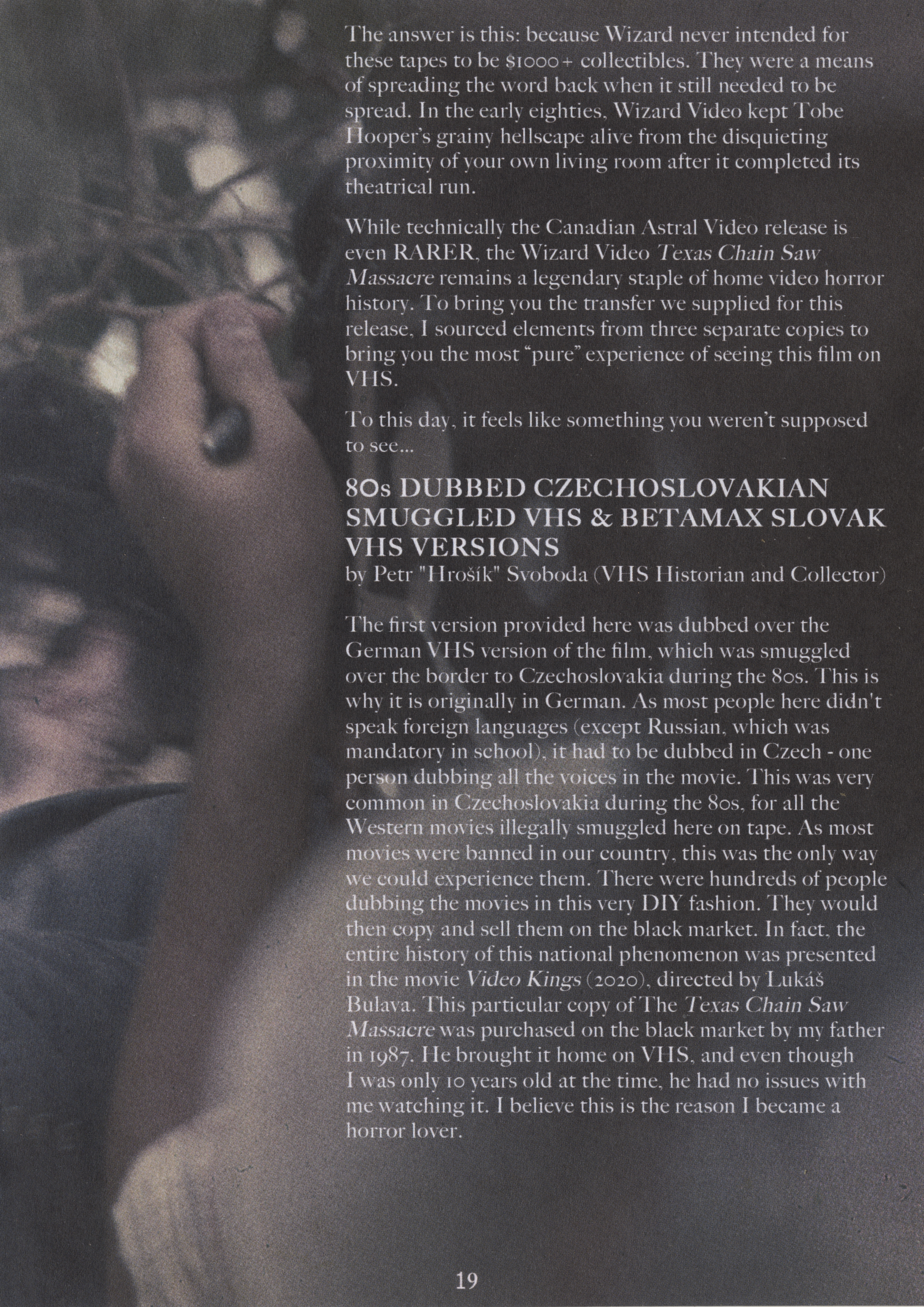
(VHS Historian, Film Programmer of *Be Kind Video* and *Video Archives Cinema Club*)

Whenever a VHS collector asks me about the "holy grail of slasher movies" in God's chosen format, two iconic mainstays come to mind: the original MEDA (not Media) version of John Carpenter's *Halloween* and the Wizard Video *Texas Chain Saw Massacre*.

I first met Alexandre Philippe when he was searching for one of these exact copies of *Texas* to utilize on-screen in *Chain Reactions* and thankfully I knew just where to turn...

Frankie Latina, a fiercely independent Wisconsin-based filmmaker, who also happens to be the world's foremost expert on Wizard *Texas* tapes. Somewhere he's got a secret footlocker full of them, but he's careful who he sells them to. He cares about the legacy of the film and the legacy of the tape. Over the years he's entrusted me with three copies. I've spent many a night hanging out in Frankie's garage, comparing notes on grail-status VHS tapes and musing on why those red stickers were never *quite* placed in the right position.

Why do some Wizard *Texas* releases have side labels and grey "clappers" and others do not? Why did they use that uniquely-pliable glossy card-stock to house them, fully knowing that video store patrons would be yanking them out repeatedly?



The answer is this: because Wizard never intended for these tapes to be \$1000+ collectibles. They were a means of spreading the word back when it still needed to be spread. In the early eighties, Wizard Video kept Tobe Hooper's grainy hellscape alive from the disquieting proximity of your own living room after it completed its theatrical run.

While technically the Canadian Astral Video release is even RARER, the Wizard Video *Texas Chain Saw Massacre* remains a legendary staple of home video horror history. To bring you the transfer we supplied for this release, I sourced elements from three separate copies to bring you the most "pure" experience of seeing this film on VHS.

To this day, it feels like something you weren't supposed to see...

80s DUBBED CZECHOSLOVAKIAN SMUGGLED VHS & BETAMAX SLOVAK VHS VERSIONS

by Petr "Hrošík" Svoboda (VHS Historian and Collector)

The first version provided here was dubbed over the German VHS version of the film, which was smuggled over the border to Czechoslovakia during the 80s. This is why it is originally in German. As most people here didn't speak foreign languages (except Russian, which was mandatory in school), it had to be dubbed in Czech - one person dubbing all the voices in the movie. This was very common in Czechoslovakia during the 80s, for all the Western movies illegally smuggled here on tape. As most movies were banned in our country, this was the only way we could experience them. There were hundreds of people dubbing the movies in this very DIY fashion. They would then copy and sell them on the black market. In fact, the entire history of this national phenomenon was presented in the movie *Video Kings* (2020), directed by Lukáš Bulava. This particular copy of *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* was purchased on the black market by my father in 1987. He brought it home on VHS, and even though I was only 10 years old at the time, he had no issues with me watching it. I believe this is the reason I became a horror lover.

Who will survive and what will be left of them?

**"THE TEXAS
CHAINSAW
MASSACRE"**

America's most bizarre and brutal crimes

What happened is true. Now the motion picture that's just as real.



A BRYANSTON PICTURES RELEASE

The Slovakian Betamax version is not as heavily edited as the German VHS tape, which was heavily censored. Slovak language versions were pretty rare in the eighties, as even Slovakian people from Czechoslovakia preferred the Czech voiceover in most cases. I am proud to include both equally rare versions of the film on this release, for super fans of *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* to discover and enjoy.

AUSTRALIAN K-TEL VHS (1984)

by Chris Chappell (VHS Collector)

The Texas Chain Saw Massacre has a troubled history in Australia. Like many other countries, this is due to censorship. In June 1975, Seven Keys presented an uncut print to the censor, running at 83 minutes. This was refused classification due to gratuitous violence. Another attempt was made in August of the same year, with the same uncut print, which unsurprisingly yielded the same result. This led to a truncated version of the film, which ran at 76 minutes and 59 seconds, to be put forth in December 1975. Once more, it was denied classification. Seven Keys appealed this, but the censor refused to budge.

LEATHERFACE
SCENE 1 (1 w/4 REPLACES SCENES 1-4)

EXTERIOR DAY

There is no sound. The sun is larger than the farne and white hot. A long, golden arc sweeps across the upper right hand corner; it is the explosive gaseous profile of the sun. There is a burst of light and a liquid rope of molten gases arcs into space and then slowly, heavily falls back to the sun.

The yellow white sun nearly fills the frame. There is a low, crackling noise. The sun begins to dissolve and to become an eye, the purple glazed eye of a dead dog. Flies swarm the staring eye and the crackling noise becomes the buzzing of the flies.

In the extreme foreground and to the right of center is the long dead and putrid carcass of a dog. The lower jaw, nearly ripped from the head, hangs wildly askew. The belly is a living, writhing mass of grey maggots; flies swarm the purple, glazed eyes. The carcass lies some feet from the shoulder of a narrow, chuckholed two lane highway. It is midday and midsummer and the brutal southwestern sun blasts the dusty, choking landscape. The air is still and heavy.

In the background is the out of focus image of a van.

The focus of the camera begins to change and as it changes a white van parked on the road shoulder in the background becomes distinct.

Before the camera has completed its change of focus the side door of the van opens and Kirk, a handsome, well built young man leaps out, turns to face the interior of the van and begins struggling to remove two long boards. He is assisted by an auburn haired girl, Pam, who remains inside the van. The thin silvery tinkling of tiny bells comes from the interior or the van.

A young man, Jerry, can be seen behind the wheel of the van and opposite him and nearer the camera is seated a blond girl, Sally.

Kirk has made a makeshift ramp of the two boards.

Franklin, a young man in a wheelchair, appears at the door of the van. He is assisted by the auburn haired

Cont..



